



IMPORTANT

Keep Up Health and Safety Precautions

The Office of Early Childhood's (OEC) memos and guidance documents, developed in collaboration with the Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Office of the Governor, remain current sources of information on health and safety precautions as we continue to battle the pandemic. Access to vaccines for child care providers and others decreases the risk of transmission and serious illness, but does not alleviate the **need for continued vigilance to health and safety practices**, even as the state continues to re-open. Taken together, the combination of health and safety practices create a system of protections against the virus. Providers should be mindful that when one strategy cannot be implemented (e.g. mask-wearing), the other strategies become even more important.

The DPH's review of cases of COVID-19 in child care settings has identified the following strategies as outlined in **Memo #6** that are critical to reducing the spread of the virus within programs:

- ◆ Adhere to cohorts of staff and children (including staff practicing social distancing in common spaces, such as break rooms and kitchens). Strict adherence to cohorting may help reduce the spread of the disease, limit the need for quarantine and/or isolation, and limit the impact on a program's overall operation.
- ◆ Manage staffing patterns to minimize staff transitions between groups.
- ◆ Maintain documentation of staff and children's attendance, staffing patterns, and daily group schedules.
- ◆ Ensure that staff who exhibit signs of illness are not working.
- ◆ Perform health screenings of staff and children.
- ◆ Continue use of masks by staff and children 3 years of age and older.
- ◆ Enhance cleaning and disinfection practices, and social distancing.

Programs that experience cases of COVID-19, should do the following:

- ◆ Report to the local public health department and to DPH in a timely manner.
- ◆ Follow public health officials' recommendations regarding isolation, **quarantine**, classroom or program closure, and enhanced cleaning protocols.
- ◆ Review and implement ventilation practices as appropriate to the type of HVAC system in the setting:
 - ◆ Information is available in **Memo #29**.
 - ◆ **Webinars** on Healthy Air, including Risk Reduction in Child Care Programs – The Science and Art of Healthy Buildings and Warm Attitudes About Cold Play, offer strategies that providers can implement.

Contact your child care licensing specialist with questions regarding the enhanced requirements.

